

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MARCH 6 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL
INTEREST

LONDON FOR AMB/EX

1. RICHARD BURT OF NEW YORK TIMES REPORTED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER, SPEAKING MARCH 3 TO 200 COLLEGE NEWSPAPER EDITORS AT WHITE HOUSE, ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SALT NEGOTIATIONS HAD TAKEN MORE TIME THAN HE HAD EXPECTED AND THAT "12 HIGHLY TECHNICAL ISSUES" STILL STOOD IN WAY OF AGREEMENT. BURT SAID PRESIDENT CALLED THREE OR FOUR OF THESE DIFFERENCES "QUITE SIGNIFICANT IN THEIR NATURE" AND PREDICTED THEY WOULD BE HARD TO RESOLVE. "MY OWN GUESS IS THAT NEGOTIATORS WILL RESOLVE MOST OF THESE ISSUES IN GENEVA AND IT WILL PROBABLY REQUIRE DIRECT MEETING OR COMMUNICATIONS

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BETWEEN MYSELF AND PRESIDENT BREZHNEV," CARTER SAID. BURT SAID "WHILE WHITE HOUSE IS DISTURBED OVER SOVIET ACTIONS IN AFRICA, IT HAS BECOME CLEAR THAT MR. CARTER IS UNWILLING TO JEOPARDIZE SIGNING OF NEW ARMS PACT BY LINKING GENEVA TALKS TO MOSCOW'S ACTION IN AFRICA." IN FACT, AT MEETING LAST THURSDAY WITH WARNKE, CARTER IS SAID TO HAVE EXPRESSED STRONG SUPPORT FOR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE AN AGREE-

MENT LATER THIS SPRING, BURT REPORTED. CARTER, HE SAID, "THUS APPEARS TO BE RETREATING SOMEWHAT" FROM REMARKS MADE EARLIER THIS WEEK BY BRZEZINSKI THAT INDICATED THAT SOVIET INTERVENTION IN ETHIOPIAN-SOMALI CONFLICT WOULD NOT ONLY COMPLICATE CONGRESSIONAL RATIFICATION BUT ALSO ARMS TALKS THEMSELVES. BURT SAID BRZEZINSKI'S STATEMENTS "ARE KNOWN TO HAVE TROUBLED" WARNKE AND VANCE. "TWO OFFICIALS REPORTEDLY WARNED MR. CARTER OF POSSIBLE DANGERS OF EXACERBATING ALREADY DIFFICULT PROBLEMS OF REACHING AGREEMENT AT GENEVA." IN HIS MEETING WITH COLLEGIATE EDITORS, CARTER SAID ONE "MAJOR ISSUE" CONCERNED RANGE RESTRICTIONS THAT WOULD BE PLACED ON AIR-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES AND HOW MANY AIRCRAFT U.S. WOULD BE ALLOWED TO DEPLOY SUCH MISSILES. U.S., CARTER SAID, IS PRESSING FOR HIGHER RANGE LIMIT FOR CRUISE MISSILES BECAUSE THEY FOLLOW ZIGZAG COURSE TOWARD THEIR TARGETS.

2. WRITING IN MARCH 6 WASHINGTON POST, MURREY MARDER SAID SIGNS OF INTERNAL DIVISION AMONG ADMINISTRATION FOREIGN POLICY MANAGERS "ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY VISIBLE." MARDER SAID ADMINISTRATION'S "ILL-COORDINATED PUBLIC ATTEMPT TO TRY TO MODERATE SOVIET POLICY IN HORN OF AFRICA BY TYING IT TO AMERICAN-SOVIET STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS WENT BADLY AWRY.... EFFORT DREW ATTENTION TO DISAGREEMENT INSIDE ADMINISTRATION ON ITS SOVIET STRATEGY." MARDER SAID CARTER AND BRZEZINSKI AND VANCE UNCLASSIFIED

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AND WARNKE "APPEARED OPENLY AT ODDS ON WHETHER THERE IS 'LINKAGE' BETWEEN HORN OF AFRICA AND SALT." POST CORRESPONDENT SAID DESPITE OFFICIAL U.S. CLAIM THAT CARTER ADMINISTRATION WAS NOT "IMPOSING" LINKAGE BUT ONLY POINTING TO INEVITABLE POLITICAL "SPILLOVER" CONSEQUENCES OF ACTIONS, SOVIET PRESS DENOUNCED WHOLE AFFAIR AS ATTEMPTED "BLACKMAIL". MARDER SAID BRZEZINSKI'S PUBLIC STRESS ON 'LINKAGE' WAS PRIVATELY DERIDED BY STATE DEPARTMENT CRITICS AS 'ABOUT AS EFFECTIVE AS SHOOTING YOURSELF IN FOOT.' BRZEZINSKI WAS BY NO MEANS ALONE IN DRAMATIZING LINKAGE ISSUE, MARDER ADDED. "HE SEEMED TO HAVE AN ALLY IN PRESIDENT CARTER. WHILE AVOIDING TOTAL ENDORSEMENT OF BRZEZINSKI'S POSITION ON AFRICA-SALT LINKAGE, CARTER PUBLICLY CAME OUT CLOSER TO WHAT BRZEZINSKI SAID THAN HE DID TO POSITION EXPRESSED BY VANCE AND WARNKE." MARDER SAID CARTER DECIDED, AT NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING, TO INCREASE PUBLIC DISPLAY OF CONCERN OVER SOVIET ACTIONS IN AFRICA. "STATE DEPARTMENT SOURCE PROTESTED LAST WEEK THAT 'INSTEAD OF TURNING IT UP NOTCH, AS INTENDED, BRZEZINSKI TURNED IT UP FIVE OR SIX NOTCHES,'" MARDER REPORTED. "DOMINANT QUESTION IS WHETHER BRZEZINSKI OR VANCE IS CLOSER TO PRESIDENT'S OVER-ALL INTENTIONS....

HIGH ATTENTION IS NOW CENTERED ON NSC MEETINGS THIS WEEK AND BEYOND, WHERE DECISIONS WILL BE MADE ON NEXT STAGE OF NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA. THERE IS GREAT SPECULA-

TION ABOUT WHETHER LINKAGE ISSUE WILL DISSOLVE OR DIS-
APPEAR IN SECRET INSTRUCTIONS THAT CARTER SENDS TO
AMERICAN SALT DELEGATION. MANY INSIDERS AND OUTSIDERS
ARE CONVINCED THAT PRESIDENT ALREADY HAS DECIDED NOT TO
TRY FOR SALT AGREEMENT THIS CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION YEAR,
BECAUSE OF CONTROVERSY IT WOULD PROVOKE ON TOP OF PANAMA
CANAL TREATIES DEBATE. NUMEROUS POLITICALLY VULNERABLE
CONGRESSMEN HAVE URGED WHITE HOUSE TO DELAY ON SALT."
MARDER SAID THERE ARE BASIC DIVISIONS, OFFICIALS ARE NOW
MORE PREPARED THAN EVER TO ADMIT IN PRIVATE, ABOUT HOW
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TOUGHLY OR HOW MODERATELY U.S. SHOULD CONDUCT ITS END
OF ZIGZAG POLICY OF COMPETITION AND COOPERATION WITH ITS
PRINCIPAL WORLD ADVERSARY. "THIS IS 'SPECTRUM OF
OPINION -- NOT SPLIT,' SOME SENIOR OFFICIALS INSIST. HOW-
EVER, NO MATTER HOW IT IS DESCRIBED, IT AMOUNTS TO
CONTINUING CONTEST FOR INFLUENCING 'PRESIDENT'S MIND.'
AND THERE IS INCREASING TALK AMONG SENIOR OFFICIALS OF
'ABSENCE OF CONSISTENT PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP.'"

3. HAROLD LOGAN OF WASHINGTON POST QUOTED SENATE
MAJORITY LEADER ROBERT BYRD AS STRESSING THAT SALT
NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD NOT BE HELD HOSTAGE TO CONFLICT IN
HORN OF AFRICA. BYRD SAID IF NEW SALT TREATY IS NEGO-
TIATED AND IS IN BEST INTERESTS OF U.S., IT SHOULD BE
APPROVED BY SENATE REGARDLESS OF STATE OF OTHER U.S.-
SOVIET ISSUES.

4. GILBERT LEWTHWAITE OF BALTIMORE SUN REPORTED THAT
SENATE MINORITY LEADER HOWARD BAKER URGED TEMPORARY SUS-
PENSION OF SALT NEGOTIATIONS AND CLOSING OF RECENTLY
OPENED U.S. MISSION IN HAVANA IF COMMUNISTS REFUSED TO
STOP THEIR ARMS AND TROOP BUILDUP IN ETHIOPIA. INTER-
VIEWED ON ABC'S "ISSUES AND ANSWERS," BAKER SAID SOVIET
INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA AND SALT SHOULD BE LINKED BECAUSE
MILITARY BUILDUP THERE "IS GREATER THREAT, FOR INSTANCE,
THAN CONTAINMENT OF LIMITATION OF SOME WEAPONS SYSTEMS."
HE SAID SALT TREATY, AS OUTLINED BY WARNKE, "SIMPLY
WOULD NOT PASS SENATE," BUT HE THOUGHT SOME OF U.S.
POSITIONS HAD BEEN CHANGED TO MAKE PACKAGE MORE ACCEPT-
ABLE TO SENATE. WASHINGTON POST PUBLISHED UPI REPORT
QUOTING BAKER AS ALSO SAYING: "WE ARE IN DANGER IN SALT
TALKS OF GIVING AWAY STORE IN ANY EVENT. AND I THINK THAT
IF WE ADD TO THAT TOLERATION OF RUSSIAN MISCHIEF IN
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AFRICA, THAT WE SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE NATIONAL SECURITY OF THIS COUNTRY BEYOND ANYTHING WE CAN EXPECT BY WAY OF ENHANCEMENT FROM SUCCESSFUL SALT TREATY."

5. SYNDICATED COLUMNISTS ROWLAND EVANS AND ROBERT NOVAK, WRITING IN MARCH 6 WASHINGTON POST, AND JUST-COMPLETED

NATIONWIDE POLL CONDUCTED BY OPINION RESEARCH CORPORATION OF PRINCETON, SHOWS "SHARP RISE IN PUBLIC'S CONCERN OVER SOVIET MILITARY POWER." EVANS AND NOVAK SAID POLL OF 1,015 CITIZENS SHOWED THAT 64 PERCENT BELIEVE THAT SOVIETS WOULD NOT "LIVE UP TO THEIR PART OF AGREEMENT" IF NEW SALT ACCORD WERE REACHED. "SAMPLE WAS FINISHED ON FEB.27, JUST BEFORE ADMINISTRATION MOUNTED MAJOR EFFORT LAST WEEK TO PERSUADE CONGRESS THAT RUSSIANS NEVER CHEATED ON SALT ONE. BUT IT FOLLOWED BY ONE MONTH READER'S DIGEST ARTICLE CALLED 'RUSSIANS ARE CHEATING;' BY FORMER DEFENSE SECRETARY MELVIN LAIRD, WHICH ATTRACTED HEAVY PUBLIC ATTENTION AND 20,000 LETTERS FROM CONCERNED READERS TO MAGAZINE." EVANS AND NOVAK REPORTED THAT SENATOR BROOKE TOLD SENATE TEN DAYS AGO THAT EARLIER ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS WERE HANDLED 'IN RATHER IMPETUOUS MANNER' AND THAT U.S. 'GAVE FAR TOO LITTLE ATTENTION TO AMBIGUITIES OF SALT ONE AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES.' BROOKE NOW BELIEVES THAT CURVES OF DECLINING AMERICAN POWER AND INCREASING SOVIET POWER HAVE CROSSED, AND MANY CONGRESSMEN -- NOT JUST THOSE IN HARD-LINE DEFENSE BLOCK -- AGREE WITH HIM." VANCE

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